

# THE AUBRECHT HOMESTEAD



This short interpretive walk identifies past events at the site and its relevance to the town of "Indrio".

1) Dewey and Mollie Wilcox arrived in St. Lucie County in 1924 from Missouri to help build the new town of Indrio. The town would cover over 2,500 acres from the Indian River west beyond the Savannahs. Over 1,000 homes, libraries, piers, an aquarium, and golf course would be built in the town.



2) The Administration Building, constructed in 1925, was located just across the railroad tracks. Back then the only road leading to Miami along the east coast of Florida was Old Dixie Highway. Salesmen were available to assist potential buyers, arriving by train or automobile, to purchase land within the new community. The building also contained a restaurant for the convenience of potential buyers.



3) A two-story stucco building, also built in 1925, stood at this site. It was used as a convalescent center/hospital for the dozens of workers building the town. Several nurses lived on the building's second floor. The nearest doctor was in Ft. Pierce.



From 1924-28, the Wilcoxs' lived in a 10 x 20 foot cabin with a wooden floor. Employees that were building the new town had similar cabins. The work camp was located along Old Dixie Highway, just south of this location.



4) The Wilcox Family created their own business in anticipation of the new town. Since Old Dixie Highway was the only north/south road at the time, they decided to build a gas station/grocery store and post office just south of the Administration Building.

The building had a freight depot to receive provisions and mail. The rail line still remains to this day. The Wilcoxs' had two sons, Jack and Bobby. The family lived behind the convenience store in a small apartment.

In 1929 the Depression hit and the land boom ended, forcing the East Coast Development Company to abandon the Indrio project. The Wilcoxs' purchased much of the property from the Company for pennies on the dollar. At one time they owned several hundred acres of land stretching from the Indian River to the Savannahs.



From left to right: Joseph, Mollie, Toni, and Anne Aubrecht.

5) Mollie Wilcox's parents, Joseph and Amelia Aubrecht, followed their daughter in 1929 and moved from Missouri to Florida and lived in the convalescent/hospital building. It was converted into a large home by Dewey. Four bedrooms and a bathroom were on the second floor. Joseph Aubrecht was a tailor by trade. One of the rooms was converted into a sewing room. Joseph made custom suits for gentlemen as far away as Stuart. A front porch overlooked the railroad and was the length of the house. The ginger you see here are from the original plantings of the Aubrechts' homestead.



6) Across Old Dixie Highway, the Wilcox's cleared the scrub and planted 15 acres of grapefruit and a few avocado trees. In times of drought, the 15 acres of citrus was watered by hand by Jack and Bobby.

Over 100 grapefruit trees were also planted to your right. The soils were sufficiently wet that irrigation was not necessary.

7) Behind the garage, the Aubrechts had a chicken coop, with several chickens and a rooster.

8) A large water tank or windmill was located here. It was probably used as a backup water supply for the convalescent center in case the electricity failed. The Aubrechts had two cows that supplied milk and butter for the family. They were kept in a small barn to your left.

9) A small seepage spring was located in front of you. Along the spring, Amelia grew a garden containing okra, black eyed peas, lettuce and tomatoes. Banana, surinam cherry and guava were also planted here.



Jack and Bobby Wilcox visited their grandparents almost daily, and hunted the nearby woods for rabbit, quail and duck. They also gathered oysters and clams, and fished from the community dock at the end of Michigan Street.

When U. S. 1 was built, the Wilcox's moved their business and home to the northwest corner of U. S. 1 and Indrio Road. They converted the convenience store into a Bar-B-Q restaurant. In 1946 they sold the business and built a home in front of the grapefruit grove along Indrio Road.

Joseph Aubrecht died in 1949 and Amelia in 1954. After their deaths, the property was sold and the Wilcox family moved to North Beach.

Dewey and Molley retired and spent their summers at a log cabin in the North Carolina mountains. They travelled extensively throughout the United States with their Airstream camper.

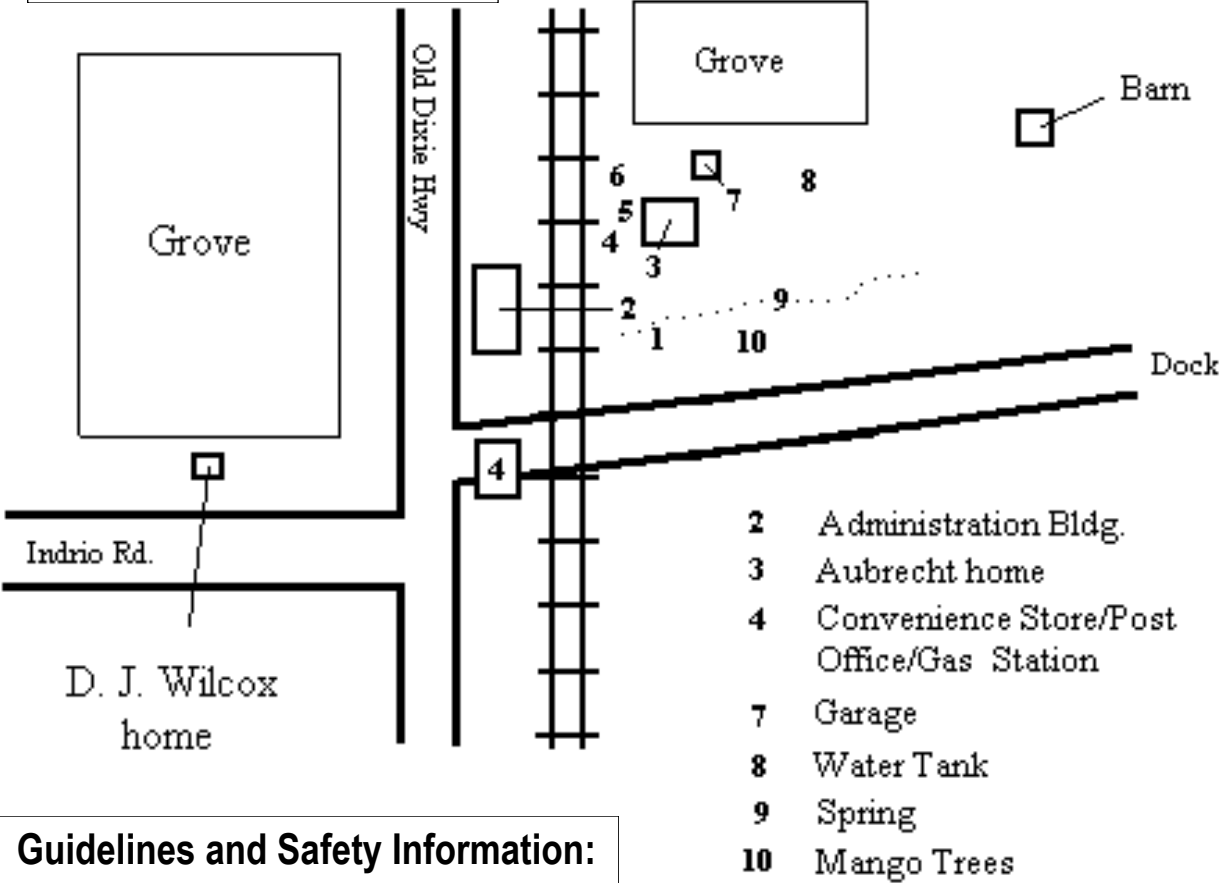
The old house was raised sometime between 1975 and 1980, remnants of which remain scattered in the area.

10) Despite all efforts to establish Indrio as a prosperous town, all that remains are three remnant Mango trees from the 1920's homestead.

Mollie died in 1980 at the age of 78, and Dewey died in 1982 at the age of 84. Jack died in 2001 at the age of 74. Robert is in good health, and assisted greatly with this historical overview.

**To learn more about St. Lucie County's natural heritage, there are more than 20 self-guiding interpretive trails located within the Natural Areas/Preserves. Each trail describes the most common plants, as well as significant geographical and historical features of the site.**

Funding for the acquisition of this site was provided by Florida Communities Trust's Preservation 2000 Program and US Fish and Wildlife Service.



### Guidelines and Safety Information:

- Be cautious of uneven trail surfaces
- Please remain on the trails.
- Carry adequate drinking water.
- In case of lightning, seek a low area away from trees, fence lines and tall objects.
- In case of emergency, call 911.
- While hiking the trail you may encounter animals indigenous to this area. Please observe from a safe distance.
- Leave all plant life intact.
- Please leave site cleaner than you found it. "Pack it in, pack it out."
- Use at own risk.

# The Aubrecht Homestead



## An Historical Perspective



**St. Lucie County  
Environmental Resources  
Department**

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[http://www.stlucieco.gov/erd/environmental\\_lands.htm](http://www.stlucieco.gov/erd/environmental_lands.htm)

Gates Open: Sunrise to Sunset (1/13)